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PARENT AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF A PARENTS AS
TEACHERS PROGRAM (PAT) IN PETAL, MISSISSIPPI

by

Victoria Jones

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford

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ABSTRACT

VICTORIA JONES: Parent and Administrator Perceptions of a Parents as Teachers Program (PAT) in Petal, Mississippi

(Under the direction of Melissa Bass)

This thesis is about the perceptions of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program in Petal, Mississippi. In order to gauge these perceptions, I developed a survey for the parents in the program and a survey for the parent educators (program administrators). The parent surveys were administered during home visits and the administrator surveys at a monthly staff meeting. I used thematic coding to analyze the qualitative data and SPSS for the quantitative data. I found that the administrators had accurate perceptions about the parents' income and marital status, but not their age. The parents and administrators were very satisfied with the program, but felt that more families needed to know about it. Overall, the PAT program is perceived as a benefit for the families that are involved with the program, and more publicity about the program can help more families find out about it.

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Introduction

Education is vital for children to grow and mature, and the educational experiences that children have during their first few years of life will impact them into adulthood (The First Eight Years). In fact, "What happens to children during those critical first years will determine whether their maturing brain has a sturdy foundation or a fragile one," (The First Eight Years 1). While all parents can benefit from training and support to better teach their young children, these resources are especially important for low income parents, due to the extra obstacles they face (The First Eight Years). These obstacles include low income parents' need to "spend more time away from their children because they are juggling multiple jobs, spending significant periods in transit, searching for secure housing or navigating complex public-assistance bureaucracies," (The First Eight Years 7). Thus, low income families have unique concerns due to their income status and may not have adequate time to spend with their children or knowledge of how to best teach them vital educational skills.

As a result, children living in low income families run the risk of falling behind their middle and high income classmates. For instance, "19 percent of 8-year-olds in families with incomes below 200 percent of the poverty level and 50 percent of those in families with incomes above that level have age appropriate cognitive skills," (The First Eight Years 1). One cause of this cognitive skills gap is more limited parent interaction regarding low income parents not talking enough to their children. For example, research with 42 families which included families who received welfare, working class families, and professional families found that "By age four, a child from a welfare-recipient family

could have heard 32 million words fewer than a classmate from a professional family," (Hart and Risley). It is important to bridge gaps like these so that low income children do not begin school behind and stay behind their classmates.

Furthermore, it is important to consider the number of children who live in low income families in the United States. Low income is defined as a family income less than 200 percent of the poverty line. There were 17 million children living in low income families within the United States during 2012 (The First Eight Years). In Mississippi, 63% of children ages 0 to 8 were living in low income families, and Mississippi had the highest statewide percentage of children in low income homes (The First Eight Years).

Taking all of these factors into consideration, it is vital that parents, especially low income parents, have the appropriate educational tools to aid their children as they develop. Although earlier is better, the good news is that "Children who do not receive the stimulation and care they need for healthy growth and development can catch up if they receive appropriate interventions" (The First Eight Years 1). The Parents as Teachers (PAT) program is one such intervention. The PAT program works with families in order to provide children with developmentally appropriate educational experiences so that the children can be better prepared as they enter school.

Parents as Teachers Program

The focus of this thesis is the Parents as Teachers program, an international early childhood educational program. PAT works with parents and children with the hope of giving the families the necessary knowledge and skills to make good choices for their

children from zero to three years old. It is a free program for the parents involved and includes personal early childhood educator visits with parents and children and regular evaluations of the child's language and social growth (Parents as Teachers).¹

The PAT program is recognized as "a national, award-winning, primary prevention and early education program that provides home-based parenting, child development, and health education," (Gelb and Clark 1). The idea behind the program began in Missouri during the 1970s because teachers found that students were starting kindergarten at a wide range of school readiness levels (Parents as Teachers). The program was established based on research showing a crucial link between children's skills, such as reading readiness, and parent's active involvement in their children's development (Parents as Teachers). The notion of providing "early detection of developmental delays and health issues, and parent education to help parents understand their role in encouraging their child's development...could help improve school readiness" was suggested by many professionals in early childhood education (Parents as Teachers).

The pilot program for PAT started in 1981 in Missouri; the program helped families with newborns (Parents as Teachers). Funding for the pilot program was provided by The Danforth Foundation as well as the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Parents as Teachers). In 1985 the Missouri state legislature supplied funding to establish PAT programs in all of the state's school districts (Parent as

1. More information about the program can be found at www.parentsasteachers.org (Parents as Teachers).

Teachers). After 1985, PAT programs were developed in every state in the United States and in six other countries (Parents as Teachers).

Parents as Teachers was established in Mississippi in 1999 by Senate bill 2609. The purpose of the bill was "to assist parents in the development of learning skills of their children from birth to age five" (para 1). The legislation called for a pilot program of Parent as Teachers to be created by the state board of education.

At its peak in 2000 there were 28 PAT programs in Mississippi, and due to funding cuts that number has decreased (Cirino). One Mississippi PAT program that still operates today serves the Petal, Mississippi community. This particular PAT program makes the case that the children in the Petal PAT program make higher scores on tests that measure their preparedness for kindergarten, solve problems better, have more advanced development with their social and language skills, and tend to be healthier (Parents as Teachers Petal Schools Brochure). Thus, the goal of the Petal PAT program is to assist parents in learning how to help their children develop and be prepared for school.

This study

The purpose of this study was to find out how parents and administrators perceive the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi. There has been a decline of the PAT program nationally and within the state of Mississippi due to factors like decreases in funding. Hopefully, this research can help administrators strengthen the program and highlight the

program's benefits, with the goal of securing more funding and support so that it can reach more children.

One of the study's goals was to understand how well the program is functioning from the view of parents and program administrators. Another goal was to compare perceptions of the parents and administrators. I developed two surveys for this research; one for the Petal PAT parents and the other for the Petal program administrators.

The results found that both parents and administrators are pleased with the program, but they want more families to know about and participate in the program. The administrators perceived correctly that there were not many single parents and not many low income parents in the Petal PAT program. Even so, the administrators thought that the parents in the program were younger than they are. Overall, the research was helpful in determining the way that those who are involved in the program perceive it. This is important so that they can understand the areas where the program is strong and know which areas to improve in order to help more children receive educational tools during their formative years.

In order to reach more low income families in particular, it is necessary to promote the program effectively. In addition, Petal PAT could work with a program, like WIC, that is already helping low income families with young children and receive referrals from that program. More advertising and public awareness of the program could be helpful for parents of all socioeconomic backgrounds to learn about the program as well.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The Parents as Teachers program provides support to improve parent involvement in order to benefit their children's educational growth. Through this literature review, I will first define what parent involvement means. Then I will highlight the need for programs like PAT. Finally, I will include a section about research findings on the Parents as Teachers program and similar programs.

Parent Involvement in Education

Parents can be included in their child's life in a variety of ways. One way is through parent education programs such as Parents as Teachers (PAT). In order to understand the need for programs like Parents as Teachers it is necessary first to better understand parent involvement, which can be interpreted in several different ways. A study by Hilado, Kallemeyn, and Phillips in 2013, "Examining Understandings of Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Programs," helped to define it by asking ten administrators in pre-school education programs how they define parent involvement. Through their interviews the researchers found varying definitions. Some administrators had what the researchers termed a "flexible understanding," which includes parents helping their children within the "school, the home, or the community, such as traditional parent involvement activities (e.g., conferences, volunteering), completing 'homework,' serving on committees" (6). The administrators who had flexible understandings typically had a positive perspective of parent involvement. Other administrators had a "narrow understanding" of parent involvement which is "limited to parent participation in parent-teacher conferences, parent education programs, and volunteering in the classroom" (6).

The researchers found that these administrators tended to hold negative perspectives of parental involvement. Given the study's findings, it is not surprising to find that the PAT program is premised on a flexible understanding of parent involvement, as seen through their belief that "Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers" (Parents as Teachers).

The PAT program receives funding from the state of Mississippi. Thus, when considering what parent involvement is, it is necessary to examine how state policymakers define the term. The Mississippi Department of Education's website outlines what parent involvement means and notes that according to No Child Left Behind, parent involvement means a "regular, two-way, and meaningful communication between parents and schools to ensure that parents are full partners in their child's/children's educational experience"(Parental Involvement). Further, the Mississippi Department of Education encourages parent involvement at the state, school district, and school levels requiring parent input on state and school district parent involvement plans (Parental Involvement). Finally, schools are given federal parent involvement requirements (Parental Involvement). According to research cited by the Mississippi Department of Education, children perform better academically as well as socially if their parents and their educators communicate regularly, and if their parents participate in their education regularly.

Need for Parent Involvement Programs

Parents as Teachers (PAT) works to give parents the tools to help children become successful in the years to come. There is a need for children, especially those from low income homes, to have more educational experiences because low income families do not typically have the financial means to pay for preschools and other activities that high income families do. "Living in poverty means children and their families don't have the income that allows them to purchase adequate health care, housing, food, clothing, and educational services" (Morrison 37). Morrison, a researcher in education, further explains that "Poverty has serious negative consequences for children and families" (37). Unfortunately, in the United States more than one-third of children are living in homes that earn a low-income (Morrison).

Penelope Leach, an author with a Ph.D. in psychology, writes about children and poverty in her book *Children First: What Our Society Must Do-And Is Not Doing-For Our Children Today*. Dr. Leach explains that "If whole societies are to benefit from policies that put children and their parents first, those policies must start by addressing poverty-known to be the most basic risk factor for children," (201).

Aber, Morris, and Raver, in a 2012 article in the *Social Policy Report* note that rates of children in the United States that live in poverty "are high by both historical and international comparison" (1). In addition, Aber, Morris, and Raver mention that there is a gap regarding school success between children from high income families and children from low income families. The article goes on to state that the impact that poverty leaves, concerning the educational gap, leads to greater costs in healthcare as well as a lower

amount of productivity in the national economy of the United States. Programs like PAT can help to give parents and children who live in poverty educational tools that can improve the child's life in the future. Furthermore, PAT programs can aid in shrinking the school performance gap between children from low and high income families.

Margaret White explains more about the issue of child poverty in 2009 in a research report. White writes that whenever income inequality is growing there are educational repercussions because of the cost of educational resources. White mentions that "families in affluent communities are better able to raise school funds from other sources to compensate for shortfalls in education funding" (11). While the implications are seen throughout a child's life because they may not have the necessary resources to be successful in school, giving children the right tools at a young age can help to make them have an equal start for their educational development. PAT programs could be a tool to help these children move out of poverty in the years to come.

Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson note that "Over 30 years of research efforts indicated that children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds entered school lagging behind their peers in school readiness skills" (15). Also, these authors note that children from lower socioeconomic environments show lower educational performances, and have greater risks of dropping out of school, which is a ongoing national and state problem. Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson go on to mention that "The research community's extensive work in identifying" factors that contributed to the academic gap as a reason that policy makers have recently analyzed "early childhood intervention programs

designed to provide families the support needed to help children experience a better start in life so that these children would enter kindergarten ready to learn" (19-20). PAT programs fall under that category of early childhood intervention programs that could help bridge the educational gap because they give families extra support.

Another reason that parent involvement programs such as PAT programs can be beneficial is that the programs seek to help teen parents. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy "roughly 1 in 4 teen girls in the U.S. will get pregnant at least once by age 20." In addition, in 2009 the Anne E. Casey Foundation article notes that "Recent data show that the U.S. continues to report the highest rates of teen childbearing among developed nations" (2). The article also mentions that teens as well as their children are affected by teen childbearing. It is interesting to note that "Compared to women who postpone childbearing until they are older, teenage mothers are more likely to drop out of school and to live in poverty" (2). In addition, the Anne E. Casey Foundation article states that teen parents' children are found to be "more likely than other children to be born at a low birth weight, face health problems and developmental delays, perform poorly in school, and experience abuse or neglect" (2). Therefore, there is a need for children of teen parents to have support in order to help their children develop. Early intervention programs such as PAT can begin to help children from teen parent homes perform better in school by providing an educational opportunity for children at a young age.

The need for parent involvement is also discussed in George S. Morrison's *Fundamentals of Early Childhood Education*. Morrison argues that "The family is the most important institution in children's education and development," "Parents are their children's primary educators," and that "Parents and other family members are collaborators in children's learning," (81). The Parents as Teachers programs share these beliefs. While teen parents and low income families benefit from PAT programs, all parents and children can benefit from the additional educational support.

Parents as Teachers Program Research Studies

In "The Parents as Teachers Program: Results from Two Demonstrations," Wagner and Clayton evaluate one PAT program in Northern California, helping Latinos mainly, and another in Southern California, helping young parents primarily. The results showed that there were "significant gains in cognitive, communication, social, and self-help development" for the children (91). The Teen PAT Demonstration revealed that children and parents who had "PAT services and comprehensive case management services designed to help mothers improve their life course benefitted most" (91). Another finding was that the "children in families that received more intensive services benefitted more than children whose families received less intensive services" (91). The researchers determined that PAT program visits to the house led to "about a one-month developmental advantage per 10 visits for participating children"(91).

Gelb and Clark published a research study about a PAT program, focused on Hmong children and mothers, in 2005. The Hmong PAT program helped 37 children in 20 low income families over a two and a half year period (Gelb and Clark). To gather

their results, the researchers used "personal visit records, Denver II Developmental screening results, family health questionnaires, and written parent evaluations of the program" and interviews (6). The results of the study indicated that program administrators need to be able to change their program models to meet the needs of diverse populations. The PAT program was successful, but it had to be adapted. For instance, there was some resistance to white women visiting Hmong homes by themselves so the program had an older male in the Hmong community endorse the program which made it more credible for the Hmong parents. This research highlights how programs can be more successful when they adapt to reach a certain demographic groups. (Gelb and Clark).

Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson conducted a research study to determine whether the PAT program is helping parents become more involved in their child's learning, whether in the home or in school (Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson). The researchers compared survey results from a sample of 40 parents who had used PAT program services in Mississippi to results from a control group who had not used the program. The researchers found that most of the PAT families were low income, minority, and/or single parent families (66). The number of teen parent families was lower than expected; this was explained by factors like teens not staying with the PAT program. When comparing parents who were involved with PAT to those who were not, "there was a significant difference...[in] the frequency in which they engaged in school involvement activities" (68). For example, the PAT parents were more likely to speak with their child's teacher on the phone and communicate with the teacher more frequently than the non-

PAT parents. PAT parents also were more involved in parent workshops and "provided supplies for class parties and activities and helped the teacher from home more often than did parents who were not participants of PAT" (68).

In a previous study of the Petal Parents as Teachers (PPAT) program, Prehn looked at how the program was implemented, compared it to the PAT national standards, and investigated how the program reacts to the vulnerabilities of the kindergarten population in Petal, Mississippi. Prehn noted the importance of childhood education programs like Parents as Teachers, because she found that whenever a child is supported by the family unit and a community then the child's development is improved.

Through the research study Prehn discovered that the Petal Parents as Teachers (PPAT) program was implemented in a manner that met the standards on a national level. In addition the time of involvement in PPAT and the number of personal visits to families during a year were superior compared to national standard levels. She also found that the services of PPAT exceeded her initial expectations. Finally, she found that the Petal Parents as Teachers program "achieved the immediate outcome of positively affecting parenting practices, with changes in parenting practices meeting expected levels" (3). Prehn suggested that "By adding demographic questions to the survey (as is already on the original survey) PPAT could obtain relevant information as to subgroups whose parenting practices changed the most from the intervention" and Prehn believes that the demographic information might be able to "influence recruitment opportunities" (15). Overall, the Petal Parents as Teachers Program was seen in a positive light through the

research study by Prehn and this study helps to provide information about the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi.

Beyond research on PAT programs specifically, scholars have studied similar programs whose findings are relevant. Sukhram and Hsu discussed a research study focusing on the Reading Together Program, which helps parents work on reading development with their 6-36 month old children. The study answered the question: "What are parents'/caregivers' perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness of the Reading Together Program?" (Sukhram & Hsu 117).

The Reading Together program was received in a positive light by the parents who participated. Further, a "majority of the participants understood and appreciated the value of early reading habits," (118) and they learned how to choose books that were interesting and appropriate for their child's age (Sukhram & Hsu). The Reading Together study highlights how parents are able to implement new skills that they learn from a child literacy program (Sukhram & Hsu).

Another important article is Sackes' "Priorities for Developmental Areas in Early Childhood Education: A Comparison of Parents' and Teachers' Priorities." The research surveyed the parents and teachers of three to six year olds in Turkey to determine whether parent and teacher demographics and experiences influence their priorities for the developmental areas included in the early childhood education curriculum. In addition, the researcher asks whether there is "any difference between the parents' and the teachers' priorities" (Sackes 1685). The researcher discovered that "parental priorities for cognitive development differed based on the gender and age of their

children" (Sackes 1688). Sackes also found that teachers placed a higher priority on "psycho-motor development" (Sackes 1687). Sackes notes that being conscious about the different priorities and hopes of parents and teachers can help administrators to target curriculum and standards (Sackes). Further, if parents and teachers agree with one another about learning objectives this could promote more effective cooperation. In my study I will also parents' perception' and teachers' perceptions.

A study by Hatcher, Nuner, and Paulsel entitled "Kindergarten Readiness and Preschools: Teachers' and Parents' Beliefs Within and Across Programs" provides more insight into perceptions of parents and teachers into early childhood education. The study involved interviews and looked at the differences of beliefs between parents and teachers regarding a child's preparedness and how preschools aid children's preparation for kindergarten. The main focus of the interviews was about "beliefs concerning meanings of kindergarten readiness and the role of preschool in preparing children for kindergarten, and on resources participants used to inform their beliefs and practices about children's readiness for kindergarten" (1).

The study involved 13 teachers and 16 parents, and found that "While teachers and parents generally expressed support for play in the preschool curriculum, parents were more likely to cite specific skills as indicators of readiness" (Hatcher, Nuner, and Paulsel 1). Also the researchers determined that the teachers thought the programs were helping to prepare the children; however, the teachers did not know if the parents thought the programs were aiding the children enough. The researchers recommended "prioritizing communication about kindergarten readiness among teachers and parents"

and in order to do this, they suggested "sharing information and concerns about assessments and local kindergarten expectations" (Hatcher, Nuner, and Paulsel 1). The research from this study provides further information into how education programs, like the PAT program, can improve parental involvement by improving communication between parents and teachers.

Shackelford's study, "Implications of Parents' and Educators' Needs in Creating a Parental Involvement Program," looked at the expectations that staff members and parents have for a rural, south Mississippi elementary school. The purpose of the study was to provide information to help create "a more effective parental involvement program for the school based on the particular needs of the families and the teachers" (1).

Based on survey results, Shackelford found that the parents and the staff wanted to have more parental involvement within the school, and recommended that the school conduct focus groups where parents and teachers as well as school administrators work together to create a program for parent involvement. In addition, Shackelford recommends that there should be a variety of ways for parents to be involved and that "A specific process should be set up to evaluate the success of the parental involvement program" (2).

The literature is clear that parent involvement is important for a child's success in the future. Based on the research, early intervention programs provide tools to parents and help children learn and aid in preparing children for future educational endeavors. More research concerning parental perceptions of early intervention programs such as

PAT can provide more insight into how parents believe that the programs are preparing their children. This was the purpose of my study.

Chapter 2: Methodology

As the literature review reflects, parents play a crucial role in their child's education. The Parents as Teachers program hopes to educate parents and teach them how to be active in their child's education from an early age. Taking this into consideration, I thought that it would be beneficial to understand the parents' perceptions of the PAT program, as well as the perceptions of the people who administer the program to the parents. I chose to focus on the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi because it is one of the remaining PAT programs within the state. Research done by Albritton helped me to understand the PAT programs across Mississippi, while the study by Prehn aided me in understanding the Petal PAT program specifically. I chose to study the perceptions of the parents and administrators by asking them to complete a paper survey.

Surveys Instruments

Selecting the PAT program

I became aware of the Petal PAT program when a friend told me about the work parent educators were doing with her daughter. Another reason I was interested in the Petal PAT program is that I am originally from Petal and attended school there. This made it easier to get in contact with the program administrators. Later, I found out that my kindergarten teacher is one of the PAT program parent educators. After I discovered the PAT program and heard how it was impacting parents in the community I decided to speak with the program's director to learn more about it. I also researched PAT nationally

and internationally to find out more details about this particular early childhood education program.

The PAT program in Petal is housed in Petal's Center for Families and Children. I knew that I wanted to conduct research about a program that was focused on education for my senior honors thesis because I think education is vital for the community. I specifically wanted to focus on a program that was funded by the government because it relates to my major of Public Policy Leadership. Hence, the Petal PAT program seemed like a good subject for my research.

In May of 2014 I met with Mary Cirino, who is the coordinator of Parents as Teachers and a parent educator for the Petal School District. I also met with Nadine Coleman, who is the director for the Center of Families and Children in Petal, to discuss the PAT program. At our meeting Cirino and Coleman suggested that I could develop surveys for the parents and the people who administer the PAT program, and they gave me permission to use a previous survey that the Petal PAT program had administered. We talked about distributing the surveys in the fall of 2014. Cirino and Coleman seemed excited about PAT, which made me want to learn more about the work that the parent educators were doing with parents and children.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study was to find out how parents and administrators perceive the PAT program. One of the goals of the research was to better understand how parents and parent educators believe the program is functioning. A second goal was to

see if there were any significant differences in parents' and administrators' perceptions.

Overall, I wanted to understand these stakeholders' views to help administrators improve the program.

Developing the Surveys

Before I wrote my survey questions, I reviewed the survey that the Petal PAT program had administered previously in order to see what questions the researchers had asked and how they asked them. The questions covered a variety of topics about the program and the way the parents perceived it. I also read a social survey handbook to learn how to phrase questions in order to obtain a clear and useful answer. My survey questions were meant to gauge parents' and administrators' perspectives of the program, especially to gain an understanding of how the PAT program impacts the children from the parents' and administrators' point of view.

I developed two different surveys for my research. The first survey was for the parents in the PAT program and the second survey was for the administrators of the program, including the parent educators who work with the parents. One of the parent educators, Mary Cirino, is also the coordinator of the program.

After I determined my research subjects, I consulted with my thesis advisor, Dr. Melissa Bass. She discussed the research process and helped me to further revise my research questions in the Fall of 2014. I also asked Mary Cirino what kind of questions would be important to include. Cirino gave me input and soon after this process, I submitted my surveys and received approval from the Petal School District, Mary Cirino,

Dr. Bass, and the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The email of approval from the IRB is attached in Appendix A. The parent surveys were anonymous with a large enough pool of respondents to ensure that no family's identity could be discerned. The staff surveys were also anonymous, but given its small size, it might be possible to discern someone's identity based on their answers. As a result, I have kept the survey data confidential.

Instruments

One of the surveys I titled "Parents as Teachers Survey - Administrators." This survey is in Appendix B. The survey was four pages long and had 22 questions. Seventeen questions required the participant to mark an answer and the other five questions asked them to write open ended responses. The first two questions asked how the respondent is connected to the program and how long the person has worked with the PAT program. Questions 3 through 12 asked about the parent educators' perceptions of participating parents' income, age, marital status, and education. Questions 13 through 17 address how the parent educators view the impact that the program has had on children and families. The last five questions were open ended to obtain qualitative results. These questions included what the parent educator sees as the strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as the ways the program could be improved. The final questions asked what the parent educator believes is the most important thing that children and parents will gain from the PAT program.

The other survey was called the "Parents as Teachers Survey." This survey was five pages long and had 32 questions. The first few questions were about how the parent found out about PAT, the amount of time the parent has participated in the program, their income levels, and age range. The next three questions asked the parents' number of children, their children's ages, and the length of time the children have been involved with PAT. Questions 10 through 27 allow the parent to gauge on a five point scale statements about how the parent educator has helped the family. Questions 14 through 23 ask the parents to indicate how they felt about their child's skills before and after being involved with PAT. Questions 24 through 27 ask about how the parent perceives the program. The final five questions were open ended in order for me to gather qualitative results. These questions asked parents to identify the strengths and weaknesses of PAT, the ways the PAT could be improved, and the most important thing that the parent and the child can gain from the program. I included similar questions in the "Parents as Teachers Survey - Administrators" and the "Parents as Teachers Survey" so I would be able to compare the surveys to understand the similarities and differences in perceptions of the parents and the parent educators.

Administering the Surveys

After I had written and formatted the surveys, I printed them out and put each survey in its own folder. I separated the two surveys in boxes, one for parents and one for administrators. Then I took the surveys to Mary Cirino.

In order to administer the surveys, I coordinated with Mary Cirino, who distributed the parent surveys to the parent educators. Then the parent educators brought the surveys to the parents' homes during their home visits in November 2014. The parent educator gave the parent a survey in a folder, the parent filled the survey out, then gave it back to the parent educator inside the folder. The parent educators did not distribute the surveys to parents if a visit was cancelled. However, Cirino believes that the parents who filled out the surveys at their visits are a representative sample since cancellations tend to be random. Parents as Teachers surveys were also distributed at playshops where parents can come once a week. A few parent surveys were filled out at the playshops, but a few other surveys were taken home and may or may not have been returned. I provided Mary Cirino with 100 parent surveys initially. Sixty-four parent surveys were distributed and 44 were returned.

To distribute the surveys for the parent educators I also coordinated with Mary Cirino. I typed, formatted, and printed the administrator surveys exactly as I did the parent surveys and then I put each administrator survey in a folder. After this, I gave the surveys to Mary Cirino. She passed out the surveys to the parent educators at their November monthly staff meeting and then collected the seven completed surveys in their folders at the end of the meeting.

On December 5, 2014, I went to the Parenting Center in Petal in order to meet with Cirino and collect the completed surveys. I then asked her a few questions for clarification about how the surveys were distributed and collected. Then I took the

surveys home with me and I began to analyze the results. Throughout the entire survey distribution process I communicated with Cirino so that I was updated on the process.

Post-Survey Administration

In order to analyze the results of the two surveys I worked with Dr. Jalyann Roberts. Dr. Roberts is a professor at William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi who teaches statistics, and he is also a friend of my family. He helped me to organize the survey results. Dr. Roberts and I used Excel to develop descriptive statistics. Specifically, frequency responses helped to analyze the demographic or categorical questions. Dr. Roberts ran SPSS statistics in order to analyze the quantitative research data. Then, he emailed me copies of the data for me to review.

In addition, I used thematic coding of the qualitative items for content analysis. I identified emerging themes that I discussed further in my results chapter. Dr. Roberts gave me direction about how to find themes for my qualitative analysis of the two surveys. His instructions included reviewing the open ended answers for both surveys and highlighting similar answers that the respondents wrote. Dr. Roberts suggested that the similar answers would then become major themes and subthemes for the results. This qualitative research inquiry is supported by J. W. Creswell *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* (2007). Creswell's book suggests a process of coding and recoding the qualitative data.

Limitations

Although I tried to conduct my research as thoroughly as possible, there are some factors that limited the study's findings. Regarding my survey questions, one limitation was that I did not ask if the parents or the parent educators were male or female. It would be interesting to note the gender of the respondents and possibly see if there is a difference in the perceptions of males and females. Another limitation is that I asked the administrators about how many of the parents in the program had completed high school and gone to college, but I did not ask the parents how much formal education they had received. That question was inadvertently lost in the survey revision process. Regarding survey administration, a limitation was that the parent surveys were not distributed to all of the PAT parents because of home visit cancellations. A method to ensure that more of the parents would fill out the surveys would have been to distribute the surveys over the course of two to three months. A final factor is that I was only able to collect data from one Parents as Teachers site in Mississippi. While collecting data from one site was my initial plan since I wanted to focus on a specific program site, further research could focus on other PAT programs across the state and the nation.

Chapter 3: Results

I created two survey instruments: One for people who work in the Petal PAT program and the other for the Petal PAT parents. The purpose of the study was to find how the parents and administrators perceive the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi.

Administrator Survey Instrument

Pertaining to the Administrator survey, there were six parent educators and one administrator who filled out the survey. Four workers had been with the program ten or more years, two workers had been with the program for two to five years, and one person had worked for the program one to two years.

Descriptive Statistics

Based on the statistics, Petal PAT workers believed that most of the program's parents were married and earned more than a low income; they also thought that the parents were relatively younger. The Administrator survey revealed that the respondents thought that less than half of the parents in the Petal PAT program were single parents. The survey also showed that most of the workers (71.4%) perceived that the majority parents in the Petal PAT program made over \$20,000 annually. The workers thought that most of the PAT program parents were ages 18 to 21 or 21 to 25. The PAT workers perceived that fewer than 25% of parents had not graduated from high school. Four PAT workers thought that 25-50% of parents had a college degree or higher and two workers

believed that over 50% of the Petal PAT parents had a college degree or higher level of education.

All of the PAT workers agreed or strongly agreed on the following statements: 1. The majority of parents are satisfied with the help that the PAT program gives their children (strongly agreed 28.6%; agreed 71.4%) 2. The PAT program helps families prepare children for school regardless of their socioeconomic background (strongly agreed 28.6%; agreed 71.4%) 3. The children in the PAT program develop stronger language skills than they would have without the PAT program (strongly agreed 28.6%; agreed 71.4%) 4. The children in the PAT program develop better social skills than they would have without the PAT program (strongly agreed 28.6%; agreed 71.4%) 5. The children in the PAT program develop better solving problems skills than they would have without the PAT program (strongly agreed 14.3; agreed 85.7).

Qualitative Questions

The Administrator survey also included open-ended questions to allow for qualitative responses. One question asked what the strengths of the PAT program are. One respondent wrote "The curriculum and PAT model is ideal for helping parents learn about child development and facilitates positive interactions between parent and child." This response was similar to other responses to the question about strengths of the program. The next question asked what the weakness of the PAT program are. The responses were that the program is not reaching enough at risk families and there is a lack of public knowledge of the PAT program. The respondents wrote that the PAT program

could be improved by building connections with at risk families and more publicity. The next questions were about what the children and parents gain from the PAT program. One respondent explained that the "The child will 'gain' a parent who is equipped with support and information to help their child develop optimally during the critical early years." Another respondent wrote that parents gain knowledge of "developmental milestones and learning approaches to help them (parent) and child self-regulate" through the PAT program.

There were three themes that emerged through the qualitative questions of the Administrator survey. The first theme was that the program is helpful to parents and children. The second theme was that the respondents do not think that the general public is aware of the program. A subtheme of the second theme was that respondents believe that at risk families are not being reached enough. The third major theme was that parents and children gain support as well as educational resources through the program. The themes were summarized below.

Parent Survey Instrument

Descriptive Statistics

Regarding the parent survey, the majority of the participants found out about the PAT program through a friend or family. The majority had participated in the program for one to two years. Most of the parents (40 out of 44) noted that their children in the program were ages one or two. The income level of most of the parents in the survey (72.7%) was more than \$35,000. Only three of the 44 responding parents indicated that

they were single parents. The majority of parents (88.6%) said that they were over age 25.

The parents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: 1. My parent educator answers my questions and concerns (strongly agreed 97.7%; agreed 2.3%) 2. My parent educator has helped me feel more confident as a parent (strongly agreed 95.5%; agreed 4.5%) 3. My parent educator has shown me things to do to help my child grow and learn (strongly 97.7%; agreed 2.3%) 4. The majority of the parents strongly agreed that the parent educator had connected them with community resources (strongly agreed 81.8%; agreed 13.6%; undecided 4.5%). The parents also agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoys working with the parents educator (strongly agreed; 93.2% agreed 4.5%; left question blank 2.3%).

In addition all of the parents that responded to these following statements either agreed or strongly agreed: 1. I am satisfied with the way the program has helped my child (strongly agreed 90.9%; agreed 6.8%; left question blank 2.3%) 2. I believe it is important to read to my child (strongly agreed 95.5%; agreed 2.3%; left question blank 2.3%). Regarding the statement: I have learned how to better help my child in school from what I have learned in this program, 25 parents who strongly agreed (56.8%), 11 agreed (25%), one undecided (2.3%), and seven parents who left the question blank (15.9%). The majority of parents (95.5%) strongly agreed that after becoming involved with the PAT program they have become more confident in their parenting abilities.

Qualitative Questions

Pertaining to the open-ended questions for qualitative responses, the parents saw several strengths in the PAT program. For example, some responses about the strengths of the PAT program were the program taught "Social skill building... and ways to discipline," "My parent educator is very knowledgeable about early child development. This experience is invaluable to me as a new mother," and the PAT program "Offers many tools to make my job as a parent easier and educates me on children's needs." Concerning the weaknesses of the PAT program, one parent wrote they were concerned about other parents finding out about the program. Another parent wanted the parent educators to visit more often. The next question was about the ways that the PAT program could be improved. The responses included the following: mailing reminders about upcoming events, more publicity, having activities for three to five year olds, providing activities in the community, and online resources. Parents thought that their child would gain social and educational skills from the program. In addition, parents wrote that they thought they would gain confidence and knowledge themselves to help them be good parents.

There were several themes that emerged from the open ended question section of the parent survey. The first theme was that parents are learning ways to help their children from the parent educators. The second theme was that the parents were concerned about more parents knowing about the PAT program. The third theme was that the respondents wanted more reminders about events and more publicity. The fourth theme was that children are gaining skills and parents are gaining knowledge through the program.

Results from both surveys

Of the 44 parents who filled out the parent survey, only three (6.8%) said they were single parents. The parent educators were aware that not many single parents are in the Petal PAT program because all of the PAT administrator survey respondents indicated that less than 50% of the parents were single.

Based on the parent responses, about 6.8% of parents said their income level was less than \$10,000, 6.8% of parents said their income level was \$10,000-\$20,000, 13.6% of parents said their income level was \$20,000-\$35,000, and 72.7% of parents said their income level was more than \$35,000. The administrator survey indicate that the majority of parent educators thought that less than 10% of the parents made \$10,000, that 10-25% of parents earned \$10,000-\$20,000, and that 25-50% of parents earned \$20,000-\$35,000. All but one of the respondents to the Administrator survey indicated that they thought that either 25-50% or over 50% of the parents earned more than \$35,000 a year. While the Administrator responses do not perfectly match the results from the parent survey, it is evident that the parent educators have a good idea of the income that the parents in the Petal PAT program earn annually.

Regarding parent age, 89% of parent respondents said that they were over 25 years old, while all of the administrator survey respondents indicated that most of the parents in the PAT program were either 18-21 or 21-25 years old. So on the whole, administrators believe parents to be younger than they are.

The following table summarizes some of the perceptions that the staff and parents had about the demographics of the parent in the Petal PAT.

Table 1

	Staff Perceptions	Parent Reports
Single Parents	Less than 50%	7%
Parents above 25 years old	0%	89%
Income less than \$10,000	Less than 10%	6.80%
Income \$10,000-20,000	10-25%	6.80%
Income \$20,000-35,000	25-50%	13.60%
Income more than \$35,000	25-50% or over 50%	72.70%

Chapter 4: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusion

Discussion

There are several main findings from the results of the two surveys. One finding is that the parents and teachers are positive about the services that the Petal PAT offers families. Also, the majority of the parents found out about the program through word of mouth. In addition, the parent educators are correct about the income and marital status of the parents, but they think that the parents are younger than they are.

Overall, the parents appreciate the services that the Petal Parents as Teachers program offers. The parents and teachers believe the program is helping their children grow socially and develop educational skills. These findings support the results of earlier research by Wagner and Clayton, Gelb and Clark, Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson, and Prehn. The fact that the findings of this study are supported by previous studies about Parents as Teachers and early childhood education shows that the program can be beneficial for families.

Another finding is the manner by which parents learned about the Parents as Teachers program initially. It is interesting that 31 parents (70.5%) said they discovered the PAT program through a family member or a friend. Thus, word of mouth has been the most effective method of spreading the news about the PAT program in Petal. In fact, word of mouth is how I found out about the program. It is good that people are finding out about the program from friends and family because that means that people think the program is helpful enough to recommend to others. However, if a parent does not know

anyone who has participated in the program in the past, they may not find out about it. Since most participants are relatively advantaged - older, married, and not low income - this method of program recruitment works against expanding the program to those most in need of its services.

Another finding is that parent educators generally had an accurate view of their parents' demographics. The parent educators perceive that the number of single parents is low, which is correct. However, "four out of 10 children are born to unwed mothers" in the United States and this number has increased through the years (Family Facts). It is important to be aware of the statistics about the prevalence of single parent homes so that the program will not miss this key group. Single parents, who often lack another parent in the home to share perspectives, could especially use the support of a childcare specialist to help them learn how to support their children's development.

Parent educators' perceptions of parents' income was also accurate. The results of the "Parents as Teachers Survey" reveal that 72.7% of the parents had an income higher than \$35,000 annually, 13.6% of the parents made between \$20,000 and \$35,000 annually, while 13.6% of parents made less than \$20,000 annually which is below the poverty line. In addition, the United States Census Bureau notes that there are 13.7% of individuals below the poverty line in Petal, Mississippi. Thus, while results of the data revealed that the program is currently reaching a proportional number of families who are in poverty in Petal, it would be beneficial to try to reach more of these families.

The need to assist families who are in poverty was supported by the work of Dr. Penelope Leach. This is cited in the review of the literature section of this thesis under the need for parent involvement programs subsection. Providing assistance to families who earn a low income is important for the children at a young age. Otherwise, the children will start school behind other children and stay behind with a higher potential for dropping out, and Albritton, Klotz, and Roberson would agree as cited earlier.

The results of the research also revealed that connecting with more families, especially at risk families, was a concern for the staff at the Petal PAT program as well as for the parents that currently participate in the PAT program. The findings indicated that the parents and parent educators want other families in the community to receive help as well. This notion of community support is suggested by the work of theorists such as Loris Malaguzzi. His developmental work for the Reggio Emilia model supports the idea concerning the importance of helping others in the community.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the surveys, most of the parents and PAT program administrators perceive the program positively. Even so, after analyzing the results and looking at the comments from parents and administrators, there are some things that might improve the program.

One suggestion would be to include more publicity. The parents were satisfied with the knowledge that the parent educators provide; however, parents were concerned about people knowing about the program. Spreading the word about the PAT program

resources by having brochures in more locations or by providing more information on the Petal Schools website might help parents find out about the program. Having a Petal PAT Facebook page might create more public knowledge. Several parents mentioned that having more connection with the community would be beneficial. Having activities that connect to the parents with the community could help more people find out about the program. Another parent noted that emails or mailing reminders about upcoming events could help the parents and parent educators connect with one another. In addition, another parent mentioned that using online resources might help to improve the program.

The second recommendation is for the PAT to reach more at risk families. The PAT administrators were concerned that they were not currently meeting enough at risk families. Promoting the success and the resources of the PAT program could help more people find out about the program and encourage more at risk families to take advantage of the opportunity. Building a relationship with an organization that is already working to meet the needs of families who need help could be a way for the PAT in Petal to connect with more at risk families. In order to work with one of these programs, PAT could set up a method of receiving referrals from the people who work in the programs. If that is not a possibility, PAT might be able to put flyers or business cards in the organizations to spread the word.

One program PPAT could partner with is Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The WIC program would be beneficial to work with because "The WIC target population are low-income, nutritionally at risk" infants and children to the age of five (Women, Infants, and Children). WIC receives funding through "a Federal grant program for which

Congress authorizes a specific amount of funds each year for the program" (Women, Infants, and Children). There is a WIC Distribution Center in Forrest county in Hattiesburg, Mississippi so the Petal PAT program could possibly partner with this center and reach out to Petal parents who are receiving help. Another possible outreach could include working with a program like the Forrest County Child Support Enforcement.

The last recommendation is that there might be a need to prioritize participation by low income, young parents, and single parents. One concern is if there is more interest in the PAT program then there might be a need to expand the program's capacity. I know that due to budget constraints this might be difficult. If that becomes an issue, then the program will have to make decisions that help them to use their funds most effectively.

Conclusion

Teaching parents how they can promote their child's education at an early age is important for the child's growth. It is vital that the children are taught valuable educational and social skills at a young age so that they will be prepared to begin school. Parent involvement can assist children and guide them as they grow. The Parents as Teachers program is specifically working to teach parents how to be more involved with their child's education during their first years of life.

The purpose of this research study was to find how the parents and administrators perceive the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi. The goals of the research included finding the perceptions of the PAT program is helping the families. Another goal of the

research was to find if the parents and administrators had similar or different perceptions about the Parents as Teachers program.

After researching related literature and information, I learned about the impact of parent involvement. When I began to research Parents as Teachers program in Petal, I started to understand the impact that the program is making. Furthermore, after analyzing the results of the two surveys I administered in Petal, I learned a more in depth view of the program. I believe that answered my research in that I discovered the way that different parents and administrators perceive the PAT program. In addition, I found more information about how the PAT program is helping the PAT families. The research results also indicated that there were similar and differences between the parents and administrator perceptions. Overall, it was important to understand perceptions of the PAT program in order for the program to be evaluated and improved.

Regarding reasons to improve the program in general, funding has become an issue. Funding is a reason for some of the PAT programs shutting down. The PAT program in Petal is obviously needing to conserve resources since funding is a problem for the program so their resources need to be used efficiently. This is important to keep in mind when making any changes to the program.

Based on the data from the two surveys that I administered, the parents and administrators appreciate the program and feel as if it is useful. However, one finding from the research was that parents and parent educators reported that there could be more publicity of the program in the community.

From analysis of the data, administrators and parents in the Parents as Teachers Program yielded results that identified their perceptions of the PAT program in Petal, Mississippi. The Parents as Teachers Program is perceived to have a positive impact on the Petal families that participate in the program. Overall, hopefully the research in this thesis will promote more emphasis and awareness for the needs of the young children, who are the future leaders, and their parents while the children are in their developmental years.

If a similar study is conducted in the future, it would be important to ask about the parents' gender, race, and education level. I mainly focused on the parents' income, age, and marital status in this study, but more information about the parents would be useful for the Petal PAT program. In addition, a study about the history of the PAT program nationwide or statewide could be useful to better understand how the program has changed through the years and the reasons that funding has been decreased in the state and nation-wide. This information could help highlight how the program could improve and areas where it has been success on a larger scale.

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APPENDIX A

Ms. Jones:

This is to inform you that your application to conduct research with human participants, "Parent and Administrator Perceptions of Parents as Teachers Program" (Protocol #15x-085), has been approved as Exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(#2).

Please remember that all of The University of Mississippi's human participant research activities, regardless of whether the research is subject to federal regulations, must be guided by the ethical principles in The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research.

It is especially important for you to keep these points in mind:

- You must protect the rights and welfare of human research participants.
- Any changes to your approved protocol must be reviewed and approved before initiating those changes.
- You must report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the IRB at irb@olemiss.edu.

Jennifer Caldwell, PhD

Senior Research Compliance Specialist, Research Integrity and Compliance

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APPENDIX B

Survey Information Sheet

Investigator

Victoria Jones

Department of Public Policy Leadership
Leadership

Senior Honors Thesis

The University of Mississippi
University of Mississippi

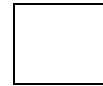
(601) 325-4369
1440

Advisor

Dr. Melissa Bass Ph.D.

Department of Public Policy

108 Odom Hall



The

(662) 915-

By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

Description: My name is Victoria Jones and I am a Public Policy Leadership student at The University of Mississippi. I am writing my honors college thesis about parental perceptions of the Petal Parents as Teachers program. Input from parents and those who work with the Petal Parents as Teachers program is vital to my project; however, you are not required to fill out the survey. I am conducting this survey with the approval of Mary Cirino who is the coordinator of the Petal Parents as Teachers program. Your survey will be anonymous so please do not write your name on the survey. I would truly appreciate your input about the Petal Parents as Teachers program.

Please note:

- The survey should take no longer than ten minutes.
- There is no monetary cost or benefit from taking the survey.
- No identifiable information will be recorded from the survey
- You are not required to take this survey. If you wish to stop at anytime you are free to do so.

IRB Approval: My study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understand the above information. By completing the survey I consent to participate in the study.

Parents as Teachers Survey-Administrators

Please check the box below your answer or fill in your response.

1. How are you connected to the PAT program?

A parent educator	An administrator	A staff member	Other

2. How long have you worked with the PAT program in any capacity?

Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	10 or more years

Parent Status

3. Based on your perception, what percent of parents in the PAT program are single parents?

Less than 25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	75% or more

Family Income

Based on your perception, what percent of PAT program families earn an income of

4. Less than \$10,000 per year?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

5. \$10,000-\$20,000 per year?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

6. \$20,000-\$35,000 per year?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

7. \$35,000 per year?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

Participant Age

8. Based on your perception, in age range are most of the PAT program parents?

Under 18	18-21	21-25	Above 25

Participant Education

Based on your perception, what percent of PAT program parents

9. Have not graduated from high school?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

10. Have graduated from high school but have not had any further schooling?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

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11. Have had some education beyond high school but have not earned a college degree?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

12. Have earned a college degree or higher?

Less than 10%	10%-25%	25%-50%	Over 50%

Please check the box below that best describes your feelings on each of the statements.

13. The majority of parents are satisfied with the help that the PAT program gives their children.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. The PAT program helps families prepare children for school regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. The children in the PAT program develop stronger language skills than they would have without the PAT program.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. The children in the PAT program develop better social skills than they would have without the PAT program.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. The children in the PAT program are develop better solving problems skills than they would have without the PAT program.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. What do you see as the strengths of the PAT program?AT program?

19. What do you see as the weaknesses of the PAT program?

20. In what ways could the PAT program be improved?

21. What do you believe is the most important thing that a child will gain from the PAT program?

22. What do you believe is the most important thing that parents will gain from the PAT program?

APPENDIX C

Survey Information Sheet

Investigator

Victoria Jones

Department of Public Policy Leadership
Leadership

Senior Honors Thesis

The University of Mississippi

(601) 325-4369
1440

Advisor

Dr. Melissa Bass Ph.D.

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Statement of Consent: I have read and understand the above information. By completing the survey I consent to participate in the study.

Parents as Teachers Survey

Please check the box below your answer or fill in your response.

1. How did you find out about the PAT program?

Invitation from parent educator	Friend or family	Website	Flier	Visiting the Center for Families and Children	Other

2. How long have you participated in the PAT program?

Less than 1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 3 years	More than 3 years

4. Your income level per year is

Less than \$10,000	\$10,000-\$20,000	\$20,000-\$35,000	More than \$35,000

5. Are you a single parent.

Yes	No

6. Which age range do you fall into?

Under 18	18-21	21-25	Above 25

7. How many children do you have?

8. What are the ages of your children?

9. How many of your children have participated in the PAT program?

Please check the box below that best describes your feelings on each of the statements.

10. My parent educator answers my questions and concerns.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. My parent educator has helped me feel more confident as a parent.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. My parent educator has shown me things to do to help my child grow and learn.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. My parent educator has connected me with useful community resources.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. BEFORE my family got involved with the PAT program I was confident in my parenting abilities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. Since becoming involved with the PAT program I have become more confident in my parenting abilities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. BEFORE my family got involved with the PAT program I was concerned about my child's language skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. Since becoming involved with the PAT program I am no longer concerned about my child's language skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. BEFORE my family got involved with the PAT program I was concerned about my child's social skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. Since becoming involved with the PAT program I am no longer concerned about my child's social skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. BEFORE my family got involved with the PAT program I was concerned about my child's problem solving skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. Since becoming involved with the PAT program I am no longer concerned about my child's problem solving skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

22. BEFORE my family got involved with the PAT program I was concerned about my child being prepared for school.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

23. Since becoming involved with the PAT program I am no long concerned about my child being prepared for school.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

24. My child enjoys working with the parent educator.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

25. I am satisfied with the way the program has helped my child.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

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26. I have learned how to better help my child in school from what I have learned in this program.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

27. I believe it is important to read to my child.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

28. What strengths do you see in the PAT program?

29. What weaknesses do you see in the PAT program?

30. In what ways could the PAT program be improved?

31. What is the most important thing that you hope your child will gain from the PAT program?

32. What is the most important thing that you hope to gain from the PAT program yourself?